

BLUFFTON PARKS ANNUAL REPORT 2023



PREPARED BY: BRANDY FIECHTER

PARK BOARD MEMBERS

JOHN GERBER

RICK MCEVOY

SUSAN CAMPBELL

CHRISTINE ZADYLAK





JANUARY

Rock Steady Boxing	152
Farm Wagon	117, 130, 134, 114
Weekday Walking	24
Open Gym	126
Tot Time	17
Matter of Balance	14, 14, 14, 13
Tot Time Play Day	19
Hooked on Crochet	6, 9, 6
Theater Thursday	15
Hue Can Paint	13
Winter 100 Challenge	221

FEBRUARY

Chilly Chili Trail Run	120
Farm Wagon	144, 132, 141, 131
Weekday Walking	91
Open Gym	71
Tot Block Party	22
Tot Time	13
Better Balance	10, 10, 8
Hooked on Crochet	12, 12, 12
Theater Thursday	9
Mother Son Nerf War	126
Daddy Daughter Dance	262
Restful Yoga	10,4
Rock Steady Boxing	117

MARCH

Farm Wagon	137, 131, 136, 138
Weekday Walking	86
Open Gym	21
Tot Time	21
Tot Post Office	19
Lego Tower Challenge	16 participants 13 guests
Theater Thursday	8
Crochet	6, 2, 1
Patrick the Leprechaun	4 winners
Rock Steady Boxing	176
Yoga with Debi	6, 5, 8, 4
Rise & Shine Yoga	4, 3, 3, 3
Spring Coloring Contest	59
Hue Can Paint	8

Awarded Wells Co Foundation Grant - Kehoe Concerts
\$10,000

APRIL

Farm Wagon	147, 137, 138, 141
Easter Egg Hunt	482
Dog Bone Hunt	34 dogs
Sensory-Sensitive Egg Hunt	14
Princess Merida Tea Party	76
Theater Thursday	10
Earth Day 5 K	43
Rise & Shine Yoga	3, 4, 4
Yoga with Debi	6, 5, 7, 6
Rock Steady Boxing	130
Senior Snippets Tech games	5, 5
Senior Snippets Movie Club	12, 13
Sr. Snippets Foreign Country	9, 11
Senior Snippets History	8, 9
Senior Snippets Crochet	8, 6
Sr Snippets Health/Nutrition	7



MAY

Farm Wagon	128, 134, 136, 130
Swim Registration	105
Pee Wee Swim	14
Theater Thursday	13
Rise & Shine Yoga	3, 4
Yoga with Debi	6, 6
Rock Steady Boxing	156
Yoga Plants & Poses	18
Senior Snippets Tech games	4, 3, 2
Senior Snippets Movie Club	11, 11, 9
Sr. Snippets Foreign Country	6, 7, 9
Senior Snippets History	7, 6, 8
Senior Snippets Crochet	6, 5, 5
Sr Snippets Health/Nutrition	6, 3, 4
Hue Can Paint	7
Nerf Wars	27
Yarn Bomb installed at pool	10 artists

JUNE

Animal Tracks Matching Game	18 winners
Farm Wagon	136, 140, 137, 128
Gagaball	27
Craft Club	36, 28, 26, 36
Stone Quarry Tour	65
Tot Time Tue and Thursday	23, 13, 37, 4, 2, 2
Strawberry Program	35, 19, 29
Crafting for a Cause	30, 20, 19, 19
Egg Drop Challenge	16
Art in the Park	38, 35, 38, 2
Firefly Ballet Tour	204
Foam Party	167
Simply Queen Concert	1,100
Dan Heath & the Paradise Band	72
Theater Thursday	20
ZZ Top Tribute Band	650
Comm Worship Celebration	454
Rock Painting	38
Matchbox Car Playday	39
Animal Explorers	89
Fuse bead Magnet	17
Cheer Camp	20
Shaving Cream Fight	62
Stuff and Fluff	57
Dinosaur Dig	21
Paper Skyscraper	12
Aqua Aerobics	3,3
Superhero 5K Run	48
Light up the Night Bike Ride	36
Rise & Shine Yoga	4, 5, 6, 5
Chick's Run	102
5 in 5K	77, 61
Yoga with Debi	3, 3, 2
Rock Steady Boxing	188

JULY

Farm Wagon	131, 117, 133
Dave Matthews Tribute	550
Junior Vet Day	25
Fastest Kid in Town	48
Drawing Classes	24, 26, 24
Bucket Drumming	22
Summer Tennis	498
Crush Bon Jovi Tribute	1,100
Cornfield Mafia Concert	159
38 th Infantry Division Band	279
Theater Thursday	16
Aqua Aerobics	2, 2, 6
Rise & Shine Yoga	5
5 in 5K	66, 72
Yoga with Debi	4, 6, 5
Rock Steady Boxing	134
Jazz Workshop	15
Ballet Workshop	12
Mini Tumbling	12
Lyrical	15
Tumbling	8
Hue Can Paint	14
Picnic in the Park	2,012 meals

Awarded the Wells Co Foundation Grant
for Disc Golf \$12,500



AUGUST

Farm Wagon	135, 127, 130, 127, 131
Theater Thursday	15
Rock Steady Boxing	184
Restorative Yoga	4, 5, 4
Yoga Flow	3, 3, 2
Virtual Triathlon	2
Clogging Workshop	4
Tap Workshop	6
Hip Hop Workshop	6
Touch A Truck (26 trucks)	735 +

Awarded Walmart Grant – Bike Repair Station \$1,000

SEPTEMBER

Farm Wagon	97, 115, 89, 106
Parlor City Trot	152
Nerf War	19 kids 12 spectators
Walk Steady for Rock Steady	117
Sr. Snippets Food Preservation	3
Sr. Snippets How It's Made	11
Sr. Snippets Book/Movie Club	6
Sr. Snippets Easy Fall Crafts	8
Theater Thursday	13
Sr. Snippets Crochet	3
Rock Steady Boxing	138
Summer Pickleball	348

OCTOBER

Vaccine Clinic	30
Farm Wagon	127,106, 121, 135, 109
Theater Thursday	10
Hydration for your Health	3
How it's Made	10, 10
Wells County History	8, 10, 12
Movie/Book Club	8, 9, 9
Easy Fall Crafts	11, 12
Public Meeting Wabash River	18
Tot Police Station Visit	32
Senior Snippets Crochet	4,5,3
Fall Coloring Contest	118
Fall 5 in 5 5K races	42, 37, 22, 41
Rock Steady Boxing	177
Weekday Walking	17
Bites & Flights	32
Toddler Time	27
Boo In Bluffton	3,691

Awarded Wells County Convention & Visitors
Commission Grant- \$750
News Channel 15 came to Halloween Event



NOVEMBER

Farm Wagon	126, 127, 114, 81
Virtual Costume Contest	15 1,030 votes
Fire Station Visit	30
Charcuterie Bites & Flights	40
WOOF Trail Run	146
Open Gym	88
Theater Thursday	11
IPRA 70 programs/ 70 min	44
Wobble Before You Gobble	82
Hue Can Paint	6
Walter Wandering Turkey	4 winners
Tot Time	15
Weekday Walking	39
Crochet	8, 6, 5
Rock Steady Boxing	171

Awarded Wells County Foundation Grant of \$11,240
for Wabash River Bank Erosion repairs

DECEMBER

Farm Wagon	107, 105, 94
Weekday Walking	61
Open Gym	83
Tot Time	25
Snowball Fight	24 kids 22 spectators
Santa's Mailbox	105
Gingerbread Contest	5 entries, 477 votes
Giant Stocking Color Contest	128
Cookies with Mrs. Claus	46
Special Needs Christmas	17 kids 13 adults
Winter Wonderland	220
Search for Santa's Helper	19
Theater Thursday	16
Christmas Eve Run	38
Rock Steady Boxing	140
Positivi-tree	44
2023K-9 Kommons Dog Park	60
2023 City Gym Membership	439
2023 Pavilion Rentals	167

News channel 21 came to the Christmas Eve Run!

GRANTS \$25,490

Kehoe Concert Series (WCF)	\$10,000
Lancaster Park Disc Golf (WCF)	\$12,500
Lancaster Park Bike Repair (Walmart)	\$1,000
WOOF Trail Run Marketing (Tourism Commission)	\$750
Wabash River Bank Erosion (WCF)	\$11,240

DONATIONS \$178,530

Kehoe Concert Donors	\$17,650
Lancaster Park	\$128,620
Rock Steady Boxing/Fitness Event Donors	\$21,735
Unrestricted Donations	\$10,525

INCOME \$216,152.05

Pool Admissions	\$33,611.86
Swim Lessons	\$5,647
Pool Rentals	\$11,155
Pool Concessions	\$20,297.55
Roush 1 Concessions	\$19,103.96
Roush 2 Concessions	\$3,597.07
Pavilion Rentals	\$18,630
City Gym Memberships	\$19,190
Dog Park Memberships	\$1,200
City Gym and Field Rentals	\$6,745
Interest from Investments	\$41,022.61
Race/ Event/ Class sales	\$35,952.00

Total: \$420,172.05

NEW PARK DEVELOPMENT LANCASTER PARK







AWARDS

Awarded IPRA Innovative Event - Superhero 5K

Awarded IPRA Distinguished Citizen of the Year- John Gerber

Readers' Choice Award –

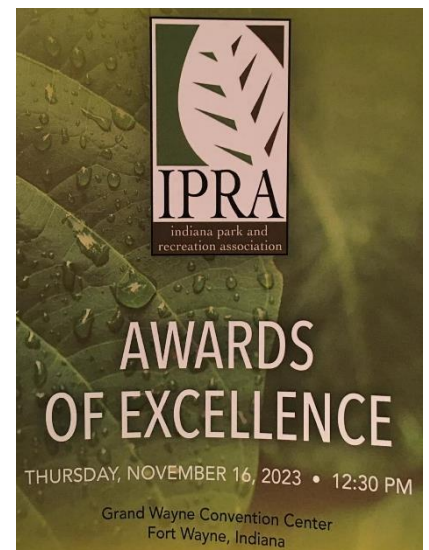
3rd Best Fitness Facility;

2nd Best Community Event Kehoe Concerts;


2nd Best Park/Playground Washington Park;

3rd Best Park Playground Jefferson Park;

3rd Best Place to Take Visitors River Greenway



IMPROVEMENTS \$903,751.02



New construction at Lancaster Park (playground, pavilion w/restrooms, two sand volleyball courts, lighted 6-goal basketball court, dual-use football/soccer field, dual-use 9-hole disc golf/foot golf, ½ mile trail, solar charging station, fire pit, gaga ball pit, two cornhole games, water fountain, etc.)

Replace Roush 1 concession water heater

Repainted pedestrian crossing lines on Interurban

Large tree planted at Veteran's Park

Ten trees planted on Greenway and in Parks

300 saplings planted in Native Habitat Waterway

Diamond dirt, field clay, and supplies for all diamonds

Titan workout bench, weights, and weight rack

New cash register Roush 2 Concessions

Cracks sealed on Interurban Trail

Replace the pool chemical pump

Fill cracks and reseal Kehoe Park path

Repair large pool boiler

New toilets at Roush Men's restroom

Purchase eight trash cans with lids

Paint Concession Stand at Girls Diamonds

Paint Jefferson Dugouts

Replace broken sidewalk at Jefferson Park

New exhaust fan for Jefferson restroom

Add playground mulch

Wrap new reflector tape along posts on River Greenway

New defender control panel at the pool

Purchase new pool vacuum wave 120

Planted grass at dugouts/backstop at Jefferson

New sauna in the men's restroom at the City Gym

New timer for lights at Lions Park

Paint storage building at Lion's Park

Paint the gazebo at the Greenway

Plant tulip tree at Lion's Park

Replace dugout roofs at Roush Boys Farm diamond

Install trim around all concession stands

17 new lounge chairs for the pool

Serve with the following committees

Bluffton NOW!

IPRA Conference Planning Committee

Kehoe Concert Committee

Parlor City Christmas

Parlor City Market

Wells County Tourism

Wells County Trails

Wellness Matters Total Event

Program Participants: 26,726

Pool Attendance: 10,351

Facebook Followers: 9,600

Twitter Followers: 672

Instagram Followers: 824

Volunteer of the Year 2023: Tammy Shaffer

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Hours: 2,443.5





Compliments

Kylie - Thank you for putting on fun things like this for the little kiddos! My girls had a blast!! Can't wait to come back for more fun mornings! 💕💕 (about Tot Time)

Don - 🌳🎵 An Unforgettable Experience at Kehoe Park's Outdoor Free Concert! 🎵🌳

I had the pleasure of attending an incredible outdoor concert at Kehoe Park, and it was an absolute delight! The highlight of the evening was the performance by Simply Queen, and they truly rocked the stage! 🎸🎤

From the moment they started playing, I was captivated by their talent, energy, and undeniable stage presence. The lead singer's vocals were extraordinary, effortlessly channeling the legendary Freddie Mercury, while the band members flawlessly recreated the iconic sound of Queen. It was like being transported back in time to witness the magic firsthand! ✨🎵

The atmosphere at Kehoe Park was electric. Surrounded by nature's beauty and accompanied by the enthusiastic crowd, the concert experience felt truly unique and unforgettable. The organizers did an excellent job of ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable event for everyone, from the spacious seating areas to the well-placed sound system that carried the music flawlessly. 🙌🌟

Moreover, the park itself was a hidden gem. The lush greenery, well-maintained trails, and inviting picnic spots made for the perfect backdrop to enjoy the concert. It's a serene oasis where you can relax, unwind, and immerse yourself in nature's embrace. 🌳💚

I would highly recommend Kehoe Park's outdoor concerts to all music lovers and fans of Queen. The combination of a breathtaking venue, a talented band like Simply Queen, and the joyous camaraderie of fellow concert-goers created an experience that will forever be etched in my memory. 🎵🌟

Thank you, Kehoe Park, for providing us with an evening of sensational music, good vibes, and unforgettable memories. I can't wait for future events at this incredible venue. Keep up the fantastic work! 👍✨

Barbara - I love this!!! This is a neat town! I have not been disappointed since I moved here! (Kehoe Concert Series)

Tali - Bluffton has the best park events. Swear.



Amber - recommends Wells Community Pool. Signed my 6-year-old up for private lessons. Wow! After the first one, he made a huge improvement, like a whole new kid in the water. My son was afraid of putting himself under the water and floating on his back. After that session, he was voluntarily doing both. The lifeguards are amazing with kids. He calls them his "teachers" and can't wait to see them. I would highly recommend signing up your kids! They are little miracle workers. Sad to see the season ending next week, but we will be signing him up again next year

Mindy – He loves tennis! I'm so glad our Parks Dept has this fun free program for kids ❤️

Julia – I took these hooligans to the Bluffton Parks Foam party!! They had a blast. How lucky are we that our parks department has so many fun activities for our kids/grandkids!!

Madeline – One of the best decisions I made this summer was putting the kids in the parks dept swim lessons. Lance has gained so much skill and confidence. Luna is getting there and trying. And these are my kind of pool days!!

Sherry & Joe - We want to thank you for such a great race!! We really enjoyed our morning in Bluffton. It's a beautiful course, and the weather couldn't have been more perfect. My husband and I both enjoyed ourselves immensely and appreciate how well run the race is. Thanks for the great Tech Run shirts; we love them. It's so great that everyone got the same awesome long-sleeved shirts, too. Really great color, nice fit and material, and a classy picture on the front!! Thanks!!

I typically always do the Fort 4 Fit half here in Fort Wayne and could not this year due to a scheduling conflict. I am pleasantly surprised that I much prefer the Parlor City Trot. I had participated in your race many years ago when it was still the 10-mile length and just hadn't been back down to run it in the last few years. I am sure I will be doing it annually now and may even do it instead of the Fort 4 Fit. Your prices were so reasonable compared to the Fort 4 Fit and such a nicer race! I like that it's a small-town race and a beautiful scenic venue. The shirts couldn't be more perfect and also the snacks at the end were much appreciated. The last few Fort 4 Fits we've done (I've been doing them regularly since 2011) there's been less and less perks, shirts not so great, plus not even hardly any post-race food for the runners last year!?!? It just doesn't make any sense!! We want you to know that your efforts and attention to detail are much appreciated.

Liz - Thank you, Bluffton Parks, for another fun activity! (Tot Time Post Office Visit)



Laura – One of my favorite events our parks department does! It keeps me motivated through the winter and has made me realize the cold isn't as bad as I make it out to be... at least, that is what I tell myself! Who wants to join me?!? You don't have to live in Bluffton to do it either, as it is pretty much all virtual at your own pace/timeline! (Wells Winter 100 Challenge)

Deena - Thank you for a great time! ~ I believe they ALL went home happily, exhausted...and warm! 😊 (nerf war)

Monica - Hated to miss it but traveling today. I was looking for fun runs out of town for Christmas and New Year and couldn't find anything! Our small town always rocks when it comes to running activities.

(about IPRA award)

Molly - Congratulations! Bluffton Parks ROCKS! I'm so thankful to live in this community with so many great resources!

Marilyn - Congratulations to everyone. Bluffton parks are the best!

Larry - Congratulations to you all, and a special thank you to the workers who go out there and do the work every day. They are some of the best parks around. Thank you, Randy and Crew.

Patricia -Congratulations! Our parks department is amazing!

Phillip - G.O.A.T...

Jen - Congrats!! We are so very blessed with an awesome Parks Department! ❤️

Kim -Congratulations!! Beautiful parks all over town!!

(about Lancaster Park)

Todd -The place was packed yesterday. Way to go, Bluffton Parks, for putting this in!

Cathy - Looks great! Thanks, Bluffton Parks, for creating this! Also, thanks to the past NWCS Supt Scott Mills and the NWCS school board, as well as community members, for working together to make a dream come true.

Levi -My family and I already went out there, it is so nice! Thank you!

Dawn - My grandkids have enjoyed it several times already. Thank you.

Troy - Played a round of disc golf, basketball, and cornhole last weekend

Joni - I took the kids Saturday morning, and they loved it.

Kevin - It's such a nice park.

Angie - We love it too! What a great addition to our community:)

Misty - Bluffton Parks Department is one of the best in the nation.

Lois - I drove by there the other day...it is going to be another amazing park for our kids to enjoy.....Great job, Parks Department



Marybeth - I can't wait to use this park!

Outdoor Concepts - Thanks, Bluffton Parks (and everyone else), for the kind words! We are so blessed to have a parks department that does so much for our community. We're glad we could help out!

Paula - My almost 3-year-old sees the new playground every day and says it's his new playground! Can't wait for it to open!

(WOOF Trail Race)

Tina - It was a perfect day!! Great pictures. Thanks for a wonderful experience!!

Ashla - Awesome day and so much fun!! Thank you!!

Mandy - First time, and I loved it!

Marla - Thank you for putting on this race; it's one of my favorites!

Diane - My first time there and first trail race. It's so beautiful!! I will be back.

Tracey - We have done this for the last 2 years. So much fun. My daughter had a blast with dad, and her bag was overflowing. And they went for an hour. So thank you for giving our kids a safe, fun place to trick or treat, and thanks to all the local businesses. 🍬 (about Halloween)

Shelby - My family had so much fun; thank you for putting on the event! (Easter Egg Hunt)

Jennifer - We had soooo much fun! Thank you!!! We came all the way from up North for this event! (Dog Bone Hunt)

Marsha - Thanks, Bluffton Parks, for another great time with our youth! It was a fun day! (Princess Tea Party)

Caylynne - We can't wait! Our parks dept is the best!! (Summer Recreation)

Rachel - We love the Nerf Wars every time! You guys always have such great events for the kids!" Thank you!

Camie - My son loved the Nerf Wars! Thank you so much!

Kylie - Thank you for putting on fun things like this for the little kiddos! My girls had a blast!! Can't wait to come back for more fun mornings! (Tot Bubble Day)

Kirsten - thanks for putting on the contest- we're lucky to live in a community with such an active parks department!

We came all the way from Gas City for the Foam Party event, and my grandkids had so much fun! Thank you for putting on fun events like this!